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AUTHOR Camperell, Kay; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A study identified the characteristics of teachers in Utah who teach reading to low-achieving students at the secondary level, the instructional procedures and materials they employ, and teachers' attitudes about teaching reading and working with low-achieving students. Surveys were sent to all teachers identified as teaching English, reading, or language arts at the secondary level to low-achieving or at-risk students including heterogeneously grouped classes. Of the 1,353 surveys mailed out, 86.6% were returned. Results indicated that: (1) most specialized reading classes were taught at the middle and junior high school level; (2) very few teachers held Secondary Reading Endorsements; (3) although half of the respondents had training in reading methods, only 30% were trained in remedial techniques; (4) most teachers used a skill-and-drill approach rather than methods that were suggested by the current reading literature such as Prep, Reciprocal Teaching, or Cooperative Learning; (5) materials used tended to be high interest/low vocabulary but did not follow up with comprehension of narratives, study skills, or critical reading activities; and (6) approximately 20% indicated that they assigned grades to low-achieving or at-risk students according to effort and cooperation rather than reading achievement. (Contains 111 references and 18 tables of data. A list of the methods texts examined, and a table indicating the number and types of teaching endorsements are attached.) (RS)

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ED 375 378

SURVEY OF READING SERVICE

for

LOW-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

in

UTAH SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1993

Kay Camperell
Utah State University

Judith Southworth
Southern Utah University

and

Dalphia Pierce
Utah State University

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ABSTRACT

Poor language and communication skills are serious handicaps for America's youth and a reason many students drop out of school. Low academic achievement due to inadequate reading ability is cited in virtually all descriptions of at-risk students, and reading two or more years below grade level in the 8th or 9th grade is a major predictor of dropping out of high school.

Although most districts have some sort of drop-out prevention program, the accommodations made by the schools may limit the usefulness of schooling for these at-risk students if they are not helped to improve their reading skills. Students who cannot comprehend and learn from complex reading materials may still lack competencies needed to be functionally literate in America in the 21st century.

Enormous changes in theory and research on reading instruction are taking place which suggest that reading processes vary among individuals depending on what is read or the type of social/instructional support given. Instead of treating reading as a set of discrete skills that can be mastered through drill and practice, researchers now conceive of reading as a multi-faceted, cultural convention. In short, reading is now perceived to be a very complex endeavor which many classroom teachers may have insufficient training to tackle adequately.

The survey was sent to all teachers identified as teaching English, reading, or language arts at the secondary level to low-achieving or at-risk students including heterogeneously grouped classes. Of the 1,353 surveys mailed out, 86.6% were returned. Highlights of the results are as follows: 1) most specialized reading classes were taught at the middle and junior high school level; 2) very few teachers held Secondary Reading Endorsements; 3) although half of the respondents had training in reading methods, only 30% were trained in remedial techniques; 4) most teachers used a skill-and-drill approach rather than methods than are suggested by the current reading literature such as Prep, Reciprocal Teaching, or Cooperative Learning; 5) materials used tended to be high interest/low vocabulary but did not follow up with comprehension of narratives, study skills, or critical reading activities; and 6) approximately 20% indicated that they assigned grades to low achieving or at-risk students according to effort and cooperation rather than reading achievement.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The literacy requirements for today's work force are much greater than in the past as our country moves into a more technological and information-based society (Goodman, 1985; Myers, 1984; Venezky, 1991). Indeed, America's declining ability to compete in the world economy is often attributed to workers' inadequate literacy and numeracy skills (D. Resnick, 1990; U.S. Department of Education, 1988). Poor language and communication skills are serious handicaps for America's youth and a reason many students drop out of school. Low academic achievement due to inadequate reading ability is cited in virtually all descriptions of at-risk students (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Newman, 1989; Peng & Takai, 1983; Reitzammer, 1990; Schreiber, 1979; Will, 1986), and reading two or more years below grade level in the 8th or 9th grades is a major predictor of dropping out of high school (L. Brown, 1988; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack & Rock, 1986; Grannis & Riehl, 1988; Martin, 1981; Strothers, 1986). Researchers studying dropouts in Chicago (Design for Change, 1985), for example, found that ninth graders with below average reading levels were twice as likely to dropout as students with normal or above average reading levels.

Most states have dropout prevention programs that are evaluated in terms of their "holding power", i.e., the number of students who complete high school (Miller,

Leinhardt, & Zigmond, 1988). The accommodations made by the schools to retain students, however, may limit the usefulness of schooling for adolescents if they are not helped to read and learn at high levels of proficiency. As noted by many reading experts and researchers, students graduating in the 1990s who cannot comprehend and learn complex information from specialized reading materials may lack the competencies needed to be functionally literate in American in the 21st century (e.g., Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1986; Bean & Readence, 1989; Myers, 1984; Resnick, 1987a; Reading the Future, 1993).

While literacy standards have changed dramatically in the past two decades, services for low-achieving students have diminished. Federal programs such as Chapter I and Special Education have supplanted locally funded remedial programs. As a result, except for ability-grouping practices, students are included or excluded from reading programs based on funding criteria which restrict services to those eligible for either Special Education or Chapter I services (Johnston & Allington, 1991; Knott, 1987; Leinhardt & Bickel, 1987; Leinhardt, Bickel, & Pallay, 1982; McGill-Frazen, 1987; Allington, 1991).

In many states low-achieving students at the secondary level receive reading assistance through federally funded programs. But students in districts without such programs are expected to develop proficient reading skills through

instruction provided in content-area classes, particularly in English/Language Arts classes (Herber & Nelson-Herber, 1984; Knott, 1987; McGill-Franzen, 1987). Thus, low-achieving students who have difficulty reading but who do not qualify for one of the federally funded programs are served by regular educators who often have little knowledge about how to teach reading and often no training in remediation (Allington & Shake, 1986; Design for Change, 1985; Dillon, 1989). The problem is particularly acute for low-achievers in Utah's secondary schools because Utah receives less funding for Chapter I and Special Education programs than most other states (Smith & Loncoln, 1988), and there are few reading specialists at the secondary level.

To compound the problem, enormous changes in the theory and research that underpin reading instruction have occurred as a result of research in artificial intelligence, cognitive psychology, and anthropology (e.g., Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; The Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990; Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1990; Just & Carpenter, 1987; Schank, 1990; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). Results of this research suggest that reading processes vary within individuals depending on what is read or the type of social/instructional support available. Instead of treating reading as a set of discrete skills that can be mastered through drill and practice, researchers now conceive of reading as a cultural practice

that varies according to interactions among (a) the personal characteristics of readers (background knowledge, beliefs, interest, etc.), (b) characteristics of texts (rhetorical structure, coherence, conceptual density, etc.), (c) the strategies employed (prediction, elaboration, monitoring, etc.), and (d) the reader's purpose (entertainment, problem-solving, memorization, etc.) in particular social contexts (alone, in classrooms, in cooperative groups, etc.).

This theory and research has led to new conceptions of what reading is and how it should be taught. Some of the research has provided empirical support for traditional practices (e.g., prereading instruction), while other research has identified practices of limited utility. Teaching specific subskills is an example of the latter. Subskill instruction involves teaching hierarchical skills using short, unrelated passages; so called basic or lower order skills (e.g., decoding, literal comprehension) have to be mastered prior to learning higher order skills. The assumption is that once students have mastered these skills they can transfer and use them to read and learn from any type of written material, regardless of differences in structure, content, or purpose. (Allington & McGill-Franze, 1989; Rowan & Guthrie, 1988). Emphasis is on mastery of reading skills as an end in itself rather than on reading as a means for acquiring knowledge, solving problems, etc.

Recent research, however, has shown that both spoken and written language comprehension are knowledge-based processes that vary depending upon characteristics of readers, texts, and contexts rather than "mastery" of particular subskills. Moreover, many researchers now argue that isolated skill instruction impedes the reading achievement of less capable readers principally because it affords little opportunity for them to develop the reasoning and problem-solving skills needed to be functionally literate in today's society (e.g., Allington & Shake, 1986; Birman, et al., 1987; Singer, Balow, & Ferrett, 1988). To develop high levels of literacy, students, especially low-achievers, need explicit instruction about how to read and learn from increasingly complex narrative and expository materials (Bereiter & Bird, 1985; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989; Pressley, Johnson, Symons, McGoldrick, & Kurita, 1989; Dole, Duffy, Poehler, & Pearson, 1991).

The instructional approaches now advocated by most reading experts emerged from recent research on comprehension strategy instruction (Duffy, et al., 1987; Lysnchuk, Pressley, d'Ailly, Smith, & Cake, 1989; Pressley, Goodchild, Fleet & Evans, 1989). Results of this research demonstrate the importance of teaching low-achieving students how to construe meaning from authentic texts for authentic purposes (e.g., Palinscar & Brown, 1984). Much of this research has been conducted with middle and secondary

school students, indicating that older students, especially average and poor readers, benefit from comprehension instruction that emphasizes understanding of real texts in regular classroom settings. Unfortunately, in many states, instruction for poor readers at the secondary level still emphasizes isolated skill instruction, watered down curricula, and "pull-out" programs (Applebee, et al., 1991; Design for Change, 1985; Knott, 1987; Singer, et al., 1988).

Because we had seen examples of isolated skill instruction in some Utah schools and because many teachers, particularly those at the secondary level, may not be aware of recent changes in reading theory and research, we felt it was important to identify how reading is taught to low-achieving, at-risk students in Utah's secondary schools to determine if the instructional practices are congruent with current theory and research. As a first step in this process, a census survey (Dillman, 1978) of English/Language Arts, Reading, Chapter I, and Special Education teachers was conducted to identify the instructional approaches, materials, and methods used to teach reading to low-achieving students in middle, junior-high and high schools in Utah.

Method

The purpose of this survey was to identify (a) the characteristics of teachers in Utah who teach reading to low-achieving students at the secondary level, (b) the

instructional procedures and materials they employ, and (c) the teachers' attitudes about teaching reading and working with low-achieving students. The focus of this report is on (a) and (b). A census survey (Babbie, 1973) was conducted in the Spring of 1990 of English/Reading/Language Arts, Special Education, and Chapter I teachers who worked with low-achieving students. Examination of class schedules indicated that schools differed in the types of English/Language Arts classes offered. Because of this, a counselor at each school was contacted to identify participants for the study. The procedures for identifying subjects, developing the survey instrument, and distributing the survey are described in this section.

Subjects

Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted in the Spring of 1990 to identify teachers who would participate in the study. Counselors at each middle school, junior high, and high school in the state were asked to identify teachers in their schools who worked with low-achieving students in English/Language Arts, Reading, Chapter I, and/or Special Education classes.

The class schedules from each school were examined to identify classes specifically designated as "Reading". This examination, as well as responses of the counselors, revealed that beyond the middle-school level, reading was rarely offered as a separate course but was considered a

part of the English/Language Arts Curriculum. Some schools offered general English classes that students could select or were advised to take in lieu of college preparatory courses, some grouped students into classes specifically for low-achievers (homogeneous groups), while other schools did not differentiate among English/Language Arts classes (heterogeneous groups) except for those designated as Honors or Advanced Placement classes. Thus, counselors were asked to provide the names of teachers who taught (a) English/Language Arts in homogeneously grouped classes for low-achievers, (b) general or heterogeneously grouped English/Language Arts classes that included low-achievers for at least one class period, (c) English/Reading/Language Arts in Special Education, (d) Reading classes, and (e) Chapter I Reading/Language Arts classes.

Slight variations occurred on the surveys to reflect differences in courses and grouping practices (Dillman, 1978). We refer to these as variations in class composition, and these grouping practices served as the primary basis for analyzing responses to the survey.

Development and Distribution of the Survey

Items for the survey instrument were developed based on (a) a review of theory and research on reading (Pressley, Johnson, et al., 1989; Camperell & Knight, 1991; Dole, et al., 1991), (b) a review of instructional recommendations found in current content area and secondary school reading

methods texts (see Appendix A), and (c) a review of recent surveys related to reading instruction and general teaching practices (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Birman, et al., 1987; Evans, et al., 1977; Irvin & Connors, 1986; Kennedy, Birman & Demaline, 1986).

Development of the survey occurred in several stages. Questions were developed to identify demographic information about the teachers (e.g., years teaching, type of training) and information about reading practices. An optional section at the end of the survey was designed to identify teachers' attitudes about teaching low-achieving students and about their preparation for working with low-achievers.

The first draft of the survey included numerous open-ended questions. It was administered to 10 teachers who taught reading at the secondary level. These teachers were members of UCIRA, the Utah Council of the International Reading Association, and they were participants in a leadership conference for that organization. They reported that the survey took more than one and a half hours to complete. Based on those teachers' responses, the survey was revised so that the open-ended questions were changed to close-ended questions with ordered and unordered response choices (Dillman, 1978). Professors of reading education from Rhode Island College, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Old Dominion University reviewed and criticized the content and scope of the survey, as did two

professors of Special Education at Utah State University. The survey was then administered to graduate students in the first author's SecEd 510 Content Area Reading and Writing courses. These students were teaching English/Language Arts at the time they were enrolled in the course, and their responses were used to revise and complete the final instrument.

The surveys were mailed to teachers in March, 1990. Each return envelop was coded to reflect which teachers responded to the survey by school and district. Teachers who did not return their survey within three weeks were sent a postcard to remind them about the survey and to allow them to request another copy if they needed one. The first two authors coded the data for computer analysis, and the data was analyzed by a statistical consultant from the Department of Psychology.

Results

Response Rate

Of the 1,643 surveys mailed, 290 were immediately returned with comments indicating that questions on the survey did not pertain to the teachers' current teaching assignment. Most of the uncompleted surveys were returned by Special Education teachers who indicated that they taught mathematics, not reading or language arts. Other teachers noted that they did not teach at-risk or low-achieving students. Thus, the total number of surveys mailed to

teachers who taught English/Reading/Language Arts to low-achieving students was 1,353 (see Table 1, p. 58), and 1,172 of these surveys were returned indicating an 86.6% response rate.

Table 2 (p. 59) presents the number of teachers who responded by the type of schools in which they taught. Surveys were not sent to teachers at alternative schools, and the "combination" category refers to schools which were combined junior high and high schools (i.e., grades 7-12). As shown in Table 2, most specialized reading classes were taught at the middle-school and junior-high school level, and only 7 (1.7%) of the teachers reported teaching a "reading" class at the high-school level.

In addition, the majority of teachers who taught the Heterogeneously grouped English classes worked in middle or junior high schools. Only 20% of the teachers in this group reported working with low-achievers at the high school level whereas over 50% of the high school English teachers in the General and the Low-track groups indicated that they worked with low-achievers.

Characteristics and Professional Background of Respondents

Eight hundred (71.3%) of the respondents were female, 314 (26.8%) were males, and 22 (1.9%) did not indicate their gender. Table 3 (p. 60) presents the age range of the respondents. As shown in the table, the majority of respondents were 36 years old or older.

Teaching Experience/Certification/Endorsements. Most of the respondents had completed at least some course work beyond their bachelor's degree. Six hundred seventy-two (57.3%) had completed some graduate courses, 112 (9.6%) held master's degrees, 219 (18.7%) had completed advanced graduate work beyond their master's, and 12 respondents reported having a Ph.D/Ed.D.

The teachers were also asked to indicate the institution from which they received their bachelor's degree, and most indicated that they were graduates of colleges and universities in Utah: 304 (25.9%) held bachelor's degrees from Brigham Young University, 243 (20.7%) from Utah State University, 198 (16.9%) from the University of Utah, 114 (9.7%) from Weber State University, and 102 (8.7%) from Southern Utah University. One hundred and seventy-one (14.6%) held degrees from schools in other states.

Table 4 (p. 61) presents the years of teaching experience reported by the respondents showing that 48.3% of the teachers had more than ten years of classroom experience.

Teachers were also asked to identify the grade levels of the classes they were currently teaching. This was an unordered response question, and teachers could select more than one grade level. Analysis of their responses indicated that many did teach at more than one grade level at the time

they completed the survey: 173 taught sixth-grade classes, 469 taught seventh-grade classes, 455 taught eighth-grade classes, 385 taught ninth-grade classes, 326 taught tenth-grade classes, 327 taught eleventh-grade classes, and 288 taught classes at the twelfth-grade level.

Teachers were asked to check the areas in which they were certificated and then to list areas in which they held endorsements. Many of the teachers were certified at more than one level: 248 had Elementary certificates, 246 had Middle-School certificates, 860 held Secondary certificates, and 315 had Special Education certificates. The array of endorsements held by the teachers is listed in Appendix B (p. 56). Inspection of this table reveals that many of the teachers had multiple teaching endorsements. Most of the English/Language Arts teachers held English endorsements indicating that they had a major or minor in English, but only 163 teachers indicated that they had a reading endorsement.

Overall, these findings suggest that the respondents were experienced teachers trained at colleges and universities in Utah. The teachers had preparation in several content areas and levels of schooling as reflected in the variety of teaching endorsements and certificates they held. Very few, however, held a Secondary Reading Endorsement suggesting that most lacked in-depth knowledge about reading processes or reading instruction.

Training in Reading and Related Methods Courses. The number of teachers who reported completing regular reading methods courses and courses related to reading is listed in Table 18 (p. 77) and the number of teachers who completed reading methods courses as well as workshops in reading or related fields is shown in Table 5 (p. 62). The results reported in this table represent a combination of the number of workshops and courses teachers had completed.

As shown in Table 5 about half of the teachers reported completing a content-area reading course or workshop and approximately 400 reported taking various other reading methods courses. The items in this section of the survey elicited unordered responses, thus many of the same teachers could have taken the different reading courses listed on the survey. A particularly noteworthy finding, however, is that only 148 English/Language Arts teachers indicated that they had any formal training in remedial reading, only 36 reading teachers indicated instruction in this area, and only 12 of the Chapter I teachers reported that they had completed a course in remediation.

Table 6 (p. 63) shows the number of teachers who reported taking inservice training and/or workshops related to instruction for low-achieving students at the secondary level. As shown in this table, the most frequently reported workshop/inservice training the teachers said they had participated in was the Utah Writing Project. Only 147

teachers reported that they had participated in other types of inservice related to methods of teaching reading to low-achieving students at the secondary level.

As another indication of professional experience, teachers were asked to list membership in professional teaching organizations. The most frequently listed organizations were the Utah Education Association (UEA) and the National Education Association (NEA). Four hundred eighty-three (483) teachers listed membership in UEA, and 390 listed membership in NEA. Table 7 (p. 64) indicates the number of teachers who reported membership in professional organizations related to their specialty areas. These were self-report responses, and many of the same teachers could have held memberships in several of the different organizations listed (e.g., NCTE & UCTE).

To briefly summarize, the above findings indicate that over half of the teachers who participated in this stud, had some training in reading methods, but only 30% (mostly Special Education teachers) had specialized training in remedial techniques. Moreover, few had attended workshops on reading instruction and most did not belong to professional organizations that disseminate reading research and teaching suggestions. These findings suggest that most of the teachers had little access to current information about how to improve the reading performance of low-achieving students at the secondary level.

Instructional Practices

In the next section of the survey, teachers were asked to respond to questions about the types of skills they taught, the materials they used, and the instructional approaches they employed. They also responded to general questions about the organization of reading instruction in their classrooms and in their schools. The term "skills" was used here to refer to both subskills and more holistic strategies.

Skills. Teachers were presented with a list of skills and asked to select ten that they taught most often or to identify skills they frequently taught that were not on the list. The list was developed from a review of the current content area and secondary reading methods texts listed in Appendix A (p. 54). The skills identified by more than 20% of the teachers are presented in Table 8 (p. 65).

Overall, the respondents indicated that the skills they frequently taught were similar, but variations did appear when the responses were rank ordered within each group. These rankings are reported in parentheses. As shown in this table, the majority of teachers identified "main idea/detail" as a skill they taught frequently, and more than half of the teachers in each group, except for Special Education, identified "context clues" and "inference" as skills they often taught. Over half of the Low-Track English, Special Education, and Chapter I teachers

indicated that they frequently taught sight vocabulary, a lower-order word recognition skill, and fewer than half of these teachers reported that they frequently taught higher-order skills associated with understanding stories/literature (e.g., character traits, figurative language).

Also noteworthy are findings which indicate that teachers may be unaware of the significance of teaching study skills such as comprehension monitoring, summarization, organizational patterns, and question-answer relationships. These are the types of skills many reading researchers (e.g., Pressley, El-Dinar, et al., 1992) suggest poor readers need to be taught to enhance their comprehension ability. Only about half of the teachers reported that they taught such skills frequently. Another indication that teachers are unaware of current trends and patterns in reading is that less than 30% of the teachers reported teaching self-questioning, story mapping, and elaboration. These skills also have been shown to enhance the comprehension abilities of low-achieving students,

Table 9 (p. 67) presents the percentage of teachers who indicated that they differentiate between teaching literature and teaching reading. As shown in this table, 47.4% of the teachers indicated that they did differentiate between these two types of instruction, and most of these teachers taught in the Low-Track English, Special Education,

Reading or Chapter I classes. This is consistent with the finding that these teachers did not frequently teach skills associated with understanding narratives, and suggests that they may be teaching isolated skills.

Another reason that teachers in classes specifically designed for low-achievers may not have focused on skills related to narrative comprehension is presented in Table 10 (p. 68). Results in this table indicate that less than half of the teachers in the Low-Track English, Special Education, and Chapter I classes use the Core Curriculum (Utah State Office of Education, 1987) to determine which skills to teach. This again suggests that a skill and drill approach to reading instruction may persist in classes designed for low-achievers, particularly in Special Education where the teachers reported using standardized and criterion-referenced test scores to make curricular decisions. Most of these tests do not reflect current changes in reading research and theory (Valencia, Pearson, Peters, & Wixson, 1989).

Materials. Teachers were asked to select or list five types of material that they used most often in their classes. Responses to this question are presented in Table 11 (p. 69). As shown in the table, the majority of teachers reported using skill worksheets/workbooks, novels, and short stories most often. Examination of responses by class composition, however, again suggests that teachers with low-

achieving students may use different types of materials than those used in regular English classes. More of the Low-Track English, Special Education, and Chapter I teachers reported frequent use of skill worksheets/workbooks and high interest/low vocabulary books than teachers in Heterogeneous and General Track English classes. These findings again suggest that a skill and drill approach to instruction persists in classes for low-achievers and that these students are not being taught how to read increasing complex material. In addition, the findings in Table 11 (p. 69) indicate that very few teachers in any of the groups used magazines, content texts, or job-related material. This suggests that instruction is focused on reading texts with narrative/story structures and students are not being taught how to comprehend other types of printed material.

When asked whether the materials used were at the students' grade level or ability level (see Table 12, p. 71), the majority of Heterogeneous and General Track English teachers indicated that the materials they used were at the students' grade level, and the majority of teachers who worked with groups of low-achieving students indicated that the materials were at students' ability level. This is consistent with the findings that these teachers frequently used high interest/low vocabulary materials and most did not teach skills associated with comprehension of narratives, study skills, or critical reading.

Instructional Approaches. When asked to select or list five instructional approaches that they used most often, the most frequently reported approaches were Directed Reading Lessons, Sustained Silent Reading, and Directed-Reading-Thinking Activities. As shown in Table 13 (p. 72), teachers in all groups except Special Education reporting using various types of teacher-guided reading instruction (e.g., directed reading lessons, guided reading procedure) and sustained silent reading. Again, however, teachers in classes specifically designed for low-achievers (Low-track English classes, Special Education, and Chapter I) indicated that they employed methods designed to teach specific skills. Also notable was the finding that less than 10% of the teachers reported using newer methods such as PReP, Reciprocal Teaching, or Repeated Reading.

Other Features of Reading Instruction

Teachers were asked to respond to other questions that concerned (a) grouping practices, (b) time spent in class reading, (c) evaluation of students' reading progress, and (d) program coordination. Results and discussion about each of these questions are presented below.

Grouping. Teachers were asked to describe how they organized students for instruction when they were not working with their class as a whole. These results are shown in Table 14 (p. 73). On the positive side, only 166 (14%) teachers reported grouping by ability. On a less

positive note, only 263 (22%) indicated that they used cooperative learning groups. The latter finding indicates that most of the teachers do not employ an instructional practice that has been shown to improve low-achieving students' reading comprehension, particularly in classes in which student ability levels vary widely (Slavin, 1989).

Time Spent on Oral and Silent Reading. Teachers were asked to report how much time per week they spent on oral and silent reading. These findings are listed in Tables 15 (p. 74) and 16 (p. 75). As shown in Table 15, most teachers (85.9%) indicated that students spent 90 minutes or less each week reading silently. This suggests that teachers who reported using sustained silent reading may only employ the strategy once a week, or, if used daily, that they are not allocating enough class time for students actually to engage in reading texts for a sustained (i.e., lengthy) time period.

Table 16 indicates that 70% of the respondents said that students spent less than 60 minutes a week in oral reading. This seems appropriate: Oral reading should be used either to assess student progress, for dramatic readings, or with poetry. It should not dominate class time at the secondary level.

Evaluating Progress in Reading. Teachers were asked to indicate how they assessed student progress in reading. As shown in Table 17 (p. 76), most teachers indicated that they

used observation and teacher-made tests. Many Special Education and Chapter I teachers indicated that they used standardized achievement or criterion-referenced tests to assess student progress. These tests are part of the federal requirements for such programs, but, as previously noted, most of the available tests do not reflect current reading research and theory.

The finding that most teachers assess progress through observation seems positive. However, what exactly the teachers are observing or testing is not clear. When asked to describe the criteria they used to assign grades to low-achieving students, 528 teachers indicated that they primarily assigned grades to low-achievers on the basis of effort and cooperation. This suggests that many low-achievers may receive passing grades in English not because the students have made progress in reading but because they have cooperated with (i.e., not caused problems for) their teachers.

Program Coordination. When asked to what extent the instructional program for low-achieving students was coordinated school-wide, 908 (77.5%) of the teachers did not answer the question. Forty-nine teachers (4.2%) felt there was school coordination to a large extent, 105 (9.0%) indicated there was some coordination, and 110 (9.4%) indicated that there was very little coordination. These results suggest either that (a) teachers did not understand

the question or (b) teachers did not see school-wide coordination of reading instruction as an issue at the secondary level. In either case, the lack of response to this question suggests that those people who teach Content-Area Reading methods courses have not convinced teachers of the importance of school-wide efforts for improving reading instruction at the secondary level.

Summary and Discussion of the Data

The purpose of this survey was to identify how reading is taught to low-achievers by English, Language Arts, Reading, and Special Education teachers in Utah secondary schools. In this section, we will briefly summarize major findings, discuss the implications of those findings in terms of current research and theory, and present recommendations for practice. The findings and implications will be organized into five areas: (a) characteristics of teachers and their training, (b) instructional approaches for guiding student reading, (c) skills taught and materials employed, (d) assessment practices, and (e) issues related to school-wide reading programs.

Findings Related to Characteristics of Teachers and Teacher Preparation

1. Over 86% of the teachers responded to the survey indicating wide-spread interest in the issue of reading instruction for low-achieving students at the secondary level.

2. The majority of specialized reading classes in Utah are offered at the middle or junior high school level. Thirty-six teachers said they taught

reading in Chapter I programs, and most of those teachers taught at the middle or junior high school level. Only 7 teachers indicated that they taught "reading" classes at the high school level. These findings indicate that unless students are assigned to Special Education classes, most reading instruction for low-achieving secondary students, if it occurs at all, occurs in English classes.

3. Only 163 teachers said they had a reading endorsement, and only 148 (30%) said they had formal training in remediation. Most of these teachers taught in Special Education classes. This indicates that (a) criteria for granting reading endorsements in Utah are different from those in other states and from those recommended by NASDTEC (Mastain & Roth, 1988) and the International Reading Association (Professional Standards and Ethnics Committee, 1992), and (b) there may be a misconception about reading and how it can be fostered at the secondary level among educators in Utah.

4. The most frequently mentioned in-service program related to literacy instruction was the Utah Writing Project, but only 347 teachers, mostly English teachers, said they had participated in this project. Only 147 teachers reported that they had participated in workshops specifically related to reading instruction. These findings reveal that very little in-service training has been provided to secondary English, Reading, and Special Education teachers to up-date their knowledge about implications of current reading research and theory for classroom practice.

Discussion. The finding that there are few specialized reading classes in Utah for low-achieving students indicates that reading instruction has not been relegated to remedial pull-out programs, except in Special Education and Chapter I. Results of this survey do suggest that instruction in Special Education, Chapter I, and Low-Track English class may be based on outmoded subskill model of reading in which students are not taught how to cope with authentic texts or

increasingly complex material (Singer, et al., 1987; Allington, 1991).

But just because most low-achieving students are not placed in remedial classes does not necessarily mean that they are receiving effective reading instruction. Students with low levels of reading ability need teachers who know how to foster reading development and teachers who are directly responsible for fostering that development. Given the small number of English teachers at the secondary level who have specialized training in reading, it appears that people either assume that all content area teachers are responsible for reading instruction or that English teachers are responsible for this type of instruction. As discussed below, these assumptions are highly questionable.

First, even though all secondary teachers must complete a content area reading methods course to be certificated in Utah, most research (e.g., Alvermann & Moore, 1991) indicates that secondary teachers do not employ methods they are taught in these classes, and it is doubtful that teachers in Utah are any different. Research (Knott, 1987) also shows that most teachers assume that only English teachers are responsible for teaching reading at the secondary level. The latter assumption is apparent in Utah's core curriculum (Utah State Office of Education, 1987) and in the criteria employed in the state for awarding

a Secondary Reading Endorsement (Utah State Office of Education, 1988).

Although the core curriculum lists reading objectives throughout the secondary English curriculum, results of in-depth interviews (Southworth, in preparation) with 18 of the English teachers who participated in the survey revealed that they were unaware of those objectives. They claimed that the core only included objectives for writing instruction at the secondary level. In addition, the teachers indicated that (a) they did not feel responsible for teaching reading, (b) they did not understand the connection between reading and literature, (c) they did not know how to teach reading, and (d) they made few adaptations, if any, for low-achieving students in their classes. These findings, coupled with those of the survey, suggest that administrators and others in decision-making positions cannot assume that students who are poor readers are receiving appropriate types of assistance in English classes or that English teachers are trained in methods that foster reading development.

Second, as noted throughout this report, numerous changes have occurred recently in the field of reading education. Most of the teachers who participated in the survey, however, did not have access to information about these changes either through professional organizations or inservice workshops. Participation in the Utah Writing

Project was the most frequently reported in-service program, but this project does not prepare teachers to assist students who have reading problems (Bill Strong and Tom Romano, personal conversation, January, 1992). Further evidence of this comes from Southworth's (in preparation) study. Most of the teachers she interviewed had participated in the Writing Project, some several times, but they still felt unprepared to teach reading and did not understand the connections between reading and writing instruction.

Finally, very few English teachers indicated that they held a secondary reading endorsement, and it is questionable that such an endorsement means that they are prepared to teach reading, especially to low-achieving students. At the time this survey was conducted, teachers with a major or minor in English could obtain an endorsement by completing (a) a content area or secondary reading methods class, (b) a course in adolescent literature, and (c) courses similar to the Utah Writing Project (Janice Brown, personal conversation, September 22, 1992). A course in diagnosis and remediation was recommended but not required. This means that English teachers only had to complete one course specifically related to reading. These requirements reflect a pervasive attitude that specialized training in reading theory and methods is not necessary for English teachers.

Findings Related to Instructional Approaches for Guiding Student Reading

5. The most frequently reported instructional methods were various traditional guided reading approaches. Less than 10% of the teachers indicated that they used newer instructional approaches such as PReP (Langer, 1985), Reciprocal Teaching (Palinscar & Brown, 1984), or Cooperative Learning (Slavin, 1989).

6. Most teachers indicated that students spent about 90 minutes a week in sustained silent reading. This suggests that students are provided very little extended time in English, Reading, or Special Education classes during the week to read.

Discussion. Plenty of controversy exists among English Educators (e.g., Lloyd-Jones & Lunsford, 1989; Applebee, et al., 1991) about the most appropriate way to handle reading assignments. Many argue that teachers should not shape students' responses to literature. Advocates of this approach do not believe that teachers should engage in the types of guided approaches advocated by reading educators. Nevertheless, results of innumerable studies (see Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985) indicate that one of the most straight forward ways to improve students' understanding of narrative or expository material is to employ guided reading approaches, particularly approaches that help students develop new knowledge for or relate existing knowledge to what they read.

Talking about what students know about a topic, setting purposes for reading, and guiding students' attention to important information before they read are essential instructional activities for all students, but particularly

less capable readers, when (a) information is new to students, (b) information conflicts with students' prior knowledge or beliefs, (c) texts are written in complex ways or present complicated ideas, and (d) students lack strategies for using what they know to guide comprehension. Thus, reported use of traditional guided reading procedures has strong support in the current research literature.

On the other hand, this finding may be misleading. Southworth (in preparation) found that many of the teachers she interviewed read materials to students, stopping to interpret the material for them. This is what these teachers considered "guided reading." Such practices, however, reflect a fundamental misconception about language comprehension processes. Reading and listening comprehension are closely related (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983), and students may not be able to comprehend material they hear any better than they can comprehend it when they try to read it. Although reading aloud to students is sometimes an effective practice, when over-used it impedes students' acquisition of strategies for dealing with more complex syntax, vocabulary, and writing styles.

Another troubling finding was that teachers apparently were unaware of some newer and highly effective approaches such as PReP, Reciprocal Teaching, and Cooperative Learning. PReP is a prereading plan developed by Langer (Langer & Purcell-Gates, 1985) that has been shown to help teachers

estimate students' background knowledge about a topic and adjust instruction according to students' needs. Reciprocal Teaching involves teaching students through modeling effective reading strategies (e.g., predicting, summarizing). This approach has been highly influential because it illustrates that (a) students can develop reading strategies without specific skill instruction, (b) the social context of reading instruction, if supportive, can help students understand fairly complex material, and (c) students can learn how to plan, monitor, and control their own comprehension through modeling and feedback. The initial findings reported by Palinscar and Brown (1984) have since been replicated by Lysynchuk, Pressley, and Vye (1990) who found that Reciprocal Teaching improves student comprehension performance on standardized tests.

Like Reciprocal Teaching, cooperative learning has been shown to enhance the reading performance of low-achieving students in regular classroom settings (Slavin, 1989). It is one of the few procedures that teachers can use to manage instruction in classes where the ability levels of students varies widely. However, as with PReP and Reciprocal Teaching, few teachers reported using this procedure.

The findings related to sustained silent reading are difficult to interpret. As observed by Goodlad (1984), junior high students' only spend 2.8% of their school time reading and that amount of time dropped to 1.9% at the high

school level. Most teachers in the present study indicated that students spent about 90 minutes a week reading silently but that is not a significant amount of time if it is the only time students read in school or at home. More to the point, if that 90 minutes is divided across days of the week (e.g., 10 minutes a day; 30 minutes three times a week), then it could mean that only token efforts are being made to ensure that students have extended time periods during the week to engage in genuine, meaningful, uninterrupted reading.

Findings Related to Skills Taught and Materials Employed

7. Less than 50% of the teachers from every group reported teaching skills associated with learning from expository materials, i.e., study skills. Only 30% indicated that they taught skills frequently cited in the current research on reading (e.g., story mapping). Novels, short stories, and literature anthologies were the materials English teachers reported using most frequently. These findings suggest that teachers, particularly those who taught the Heterogeneous and General English classes, did not feel responsible for teaching students how to read a wide variety of materials beyond the narratives and other literary works typically associated with English instruction.

8. Less than 50% of the teachers who taught classes designed for low-achieving students reported teaching higher order skills (e.g., plot, figurative language, critical reading) associated with understanding narratives. Most instruction appeared to center around workbooks and high interest/low vocabulary books suggesting that students in these classes are not being taught how to read increasingly complex material. This may also indicate that these teachers are still teaching specific subskills in isolation.

Discussion. Students' knowledge of the organizational patterns, structures, or relationships used in different types of written material was examined extensively during the 1970s and 1980s. The principal finding that emerged from this research is that students' understanding was influenced by their ability to identify and follow narrative (i.e., story) or expository (i.e., logical/hierarchical) structures in what they read (e.g., Stein, 1983; Garner, 1987a, 1987b, 1992). Students, especially poor readers, need to be taught explicitly how to identify expository patterns in sentences, paragraphs, and entire passages. These patterns indicate to readers how ideas relate to each other and how to organize ideas in their minds as they read.

Thus, the finding that few teachers reported teaching students how to perceive relationships, follow organizational patterns, or read informational texts is particularly troublesome because (a) numerous researchers have documented that such instruction improves students' ability to understand what they read (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980; Taylor & Beach, 1984; Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987; Garner, 1987a, 1987b), (b) many learning strategies (e.g., summarizing, outlining, critical reading) depend on this skill, and (c) most of the materials students are expected to learn from, and will use as adults, are written in expository forms. If English teachers do not take responsibility for explicitly teaching students how to

understand this type of writing and, therefore, develop the learning strategies that accrue from knowing how to read this type of material, who will?

Just as troubling is the finding that teachers who work in classes designed for low-achievers are not teaching their students how to understand narrative material. Identifying and following the plot of a story is a specialized skill that many poor readers do not develop without explicit instruction. Again, several researchers (Risko & Alvarez, 1986; Idol, 1987; Dimino, Gersten, Carnine & Blake, 1990) have demonstrated that students' understanding of narratives improves when they are taught how to identify and follow the way ideas in stories are organized. Singer and Donlan (1982), moveover, found that even capable readers at the secondary level profit from instruction that teaches them how to identify and use the structure of complex stories to guide comprehension.

New theories and models of reading emphasize the pervasive influence of background knowledge on comprehension (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983; Just & Carpenter, 1986; Rumelhart, 1991), and research in this area has changed reading educators' conceptions of skills/strategies and how to teach them. Skills such as identifying main ideas, drawing inferences, predicting up-coming information, or forming generalizations depend upon complex interactions among characteristics of the material being read, the

readers' background knowledge, their purpose, etc. rather than upon mastery of any particular skill. Moreover, students cannot learn how to employ complex language processing strategies through practice on fragmented subskills using short unrelated passages (Langer & Applebee, 1986; Kintsch, 1987). Nevertheless, as demonstrated by Palinscar and Brown (1984), Pearson and his colleagues (e.g., Pearson & Dole, 1987; Pearson & Raphael, 1990), and Duffy, et al. (1987), students can be taught complex processing skills/strategies through modeling and direct explanations. Indeed, research on how to teach complex comprehension and learning strategies proliferated during the 1980s (see Lysynchuk, Pressley, et al., 1989 for a review of this research), and there is a good deal of consensus among reading researchers about what kinds of skills/strategies should be taught and about how they should be taught (Paris, Lipson, & Wixon, 1983; Paris, Wixson, & Palincsar, 1986; Pressley, Johnson, et al., 1989; Dole, et al., 1991; Pearson & Dole, 1987).

The recommended skills/strategies are more holistic, there are fewer of them, and they are the same for students of all age, grade, and ability levels. The skills/strategies do not change; the difficulty of the materials and tasks change as students progress through school. Specifically, research now indicates that students be taught how to:

1. Use background knowledge to make sense out of written material by actively making predictions, generating questions, drawing inferences, forming images, etc.

2. Identify and follow the patterns writers use to (a) connect related ideas within sentences, paragraphs, and lengthy passages, (b) signal central ideas, generalizations, and themes, and (c) define the meaning of unfamiliar words.

3. Vary strategies according to (a) different types of materials (e.g.,novels/textbooks) and (b) different purposes for reading (e.g., responding aesthetically, learning technical information, evaluating ideas).

4. Formulate oral and written summaries about central ideas, generalizations, and themes.

5. Recognize and recall explicitly stated information.

6. Plan (set purposes, recall related information), monitor (determine if understanding, achieving purposes), and regulate (adjust strategies if need be) one's own reading performance.

7. Develop conscious knowledge about reading processes (e.g., "reading is making sense of ideas, it's communicating with an author") and strategies (e.g., "I need to read carefully to learn technical information that is new to me").

8. Develop motivation for reading by learning that understanding, appreciating, and learning from written material results from effective use of strategies.

9. Connect and integrate ideas read in one setting with information learned in other settings and with personal knowledge and experience.

10. Analyze and critically evaluate information read.

Pressley, Johnson, et al. (1989), Paris and Winograd (1990), Pearson and Raphael (1990), and Dole, et al. (1991) all advocate use of an explicit, direct explanation model

for strategy instruction, or what Pressley, El-Dinary, et al. (1992) refer to as transactional comprehension instruction. Direct explanation instruction emphasizes explicitly (a) describing and modeling for students the mental steps involved in using a strategy, (b) providing feedback that links performance to strategy use (vs. ability) and makes effects of strategy use obvious to students, (c) guiding and scaffolding student practice, (d) requiring students to verbalize how they arrive at answers, and (e) using regular classroom materials so that students learn when and where to apply strategies using authentic texts. Transactional strategy instruction includes direct explanations but also stresses the importance of (a) using students' responses during reading lessons to shape instruction and (b) developing interpretations through group interactions.

Findings Related to Assessment Practices

9. About 50% of the teachers indicated that they primarily assigned grades to low-achieving students on the basis of effort and cooperation. This suggests that these students are receiving passing grades based on social/managerial criteria rather than progress in reading.

Discussion. New conceptions of reading and reading instruction have also led to the development of new ways to assess reading achievement. New standardized measures of reading are currently being piloted in California, Maryland, Michigan, and Illinois (California Department of Education,

1991; Pressley, El-Dinary, et al., 1992; Valencia, et al., 1989). These tests differ from traditional measures in several ways. For example, students read complete stories and expository passages rather than fragmented segments devoid of context. Students' prior knowledge about the topics of reading passages also is assessed to determine if performance difficulties are due to knowledge or strategy deficits.

Assessment has become more qualitative and should include written and multiple-choice responses as well as assess students' knowledge and attitudes about reading. Obviously, assessment procedures should be designed to assess students' ability to employ the strategies described above. One important consequence of new assessment practices is that teachers can develop concrete informal techniques (e.g., think-alouds, summary writing, descriptions of strategy use, justification and explanations of answers to questions, audiotapes of oral reading fluency, videotapes of group discussions) to use in their classrooms to assess reading performance (e.g., Johnston, 1989; Pressley, El-Dinary, et al., 1992; Wade, 1990). These measures can be used to demonstrate to students, parents, and administrators the <u>progress</u> students have made towards developing the language comprehension, reasoning, and problem-solving skills students need to be functionally

literate in today's society (see Collins & Mangieri, 1992; Reading the Future, 1993).

Findings Related to School-Wide Efforts to Improve Reading

10. The majority of teachers (908) did not respond to a question designed to determine if there was a coordinated, school-wide reading program in their school.

Discussion. The lack of response to this question suggests that English, Reading, and Special Education teachers are unaware of the importance of a planned reading curriculum at the secondary level. Apparently, they do not understand that reading can improve throughout a person's lifetime as long as they continue to read; moreover, changing economic and social circumstances, such as current technological advances, require people to continually adapt and up-grade literacy skills (Herber & Herber-Nelson, 1984; Resnick, 1987a).

The lack of response by English teachers is particularly disconcerting because English teachers are directly responsible for guiding students' growth in reading at the secondary level. Perhaps teachers did not answer this question because they are confused about reading instruction and how it is connected to their literature and writing curricula or because they did not understand the reading objectives explicitly stated in the Core Curriculum. This indicates that intensive efforts need to be made in Utah at the secondary level to educate English teachers

about newer conceptions of reading and how to foster its development in all students.

Summary

Teaching students strategies for comprehending what they read is a way to help all students, including poor readers, develop language processing strategies that underpin effective comprehension and learning/study strategies in a regular classroom setting (Means, Chelemer & Knapp, 1991). Much of the strategy research has been conducted with middle and secondary school students (Dole, et al., 1989), indicating that older students, especially average and poor readers, benefit from this type of instruction. As noted by Pressley, Johnson, et al. (1989), students who do not develop effective reading strategies are probably students who have not been taught explicitly what the strategies are and how to use them (see Allington, 1991). The instructional approaches that have emerged from comprehension strategy research are educationally significant and stand in contrast to approaches that attempt to help readers improve simply by having them (a) read more and having them write more (see Duffy, 1992; Pearson, 1989), or (b) practice specific skill exercises at the expense of learning how to construe meaning from authentic reading material.

Increased time spent on reading and writing in school helps, but students do not develop reading strategies

through osmosis or without guidance (Dole, Valencia, 1991; Pressley, El-Dinary, 1992; Smith, 1992). Students, especially low-achievers, need explicit instruction about how to read and learn from increasing complex narrative and expository material (Bereiter & Bird, 1985; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1990; Roehler & Duffy, 1991). Moreover, an isolated skill and drill approach to reading instruction may present significant obstacles to poor readers at the secondary level because research results repeatedly indicate that this type of instruction emphasizes lower-order skills and does not lead to improved reading performance (e.g., Allington & Shake, 1986; Birman, et al., 1987; Singer, et al., 1988).

An equally important issue at the secondary level is the need to convince teachers and administrators that students' poor performance on academic tasks may be due to knowledge, strategy, or attributional deficits--conditions that can be modified--rather than lack of effort or ability so that teachers will invest the instructional effort it takes to help unsuccessful students acquire strategies (Borkowski, et al., 1990; Means & Knapp, 1991; Rich & Pressley, 1990). Teachers can be and need to be trained in methods for guiding comprehension and teaching comprehension strategies in regular classroom settings so that they can adjust instruction according to (a) their purposes, (b) the

materials they assign, and (c) particular students' needs (Duffy, et al., 1987; Roehler & Duffy, 1991).

Recommendations

1. Teachers and administrators need to be informed about changing literacy standards and what it means to be functionally literate in an advanced technological society.

2. Teachers and administrators need to be informed about changes in reading assessment practices and the limitations of the standardized tests currently available.

3. A specific person needs to be responsible for secondary reading instruction at the school or district level to inform and train teachers in effective approaches for teaching and assessing reading.

4. Workshops need to be developed to disseminate information about language comprehension and learning processes so that teachers can evaluate and adjust their instructional practices according to results of current research and theory.

    a. Workshops for English teachers should clarify for them the connections between instruction in reading, writing, and literature and what their responsibilities are for fostering the reading development of all students. This should include discussions about the limitations of only having students read stories, novels, and other literary materials.

    b. Workshops for Special Education and Chapter I teachers should help them understand the limitations of subskill instruction and use of high interest/low vocabulary material for improving the reading performance of low-achieving students.

    c. Workshops need to be developed for English, Special Education, and Chapter I teachers to train them in techniques for <u>explicitly</u> teaching complex comprehension and learning strategies.

    d. Workshops for English teachers should teach them techniques for working with students of varying ability levels in a regular classroom setting.

e. Workshops need to be developed for English, Special Education, and Chapter I teachers to train them in ways to help students acquire conscious knowledge about reading processes and strategies as well as in ways to help students learn how to plan, monitor, and regulate their use of strategies.

5. Students need to be provided extended time--more than 10 or 15 minutes a day--to read material that is personally meaningful and interesting.

6. The criteria for awarding reading endorsements need to be aligned with those used in other states and recommended by various accrediting agencies.

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Appendix A

Methods Texts Examined to Determine the Content and Scope of the Survey Instrument

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APPENDIX B

NUMBER AND TYPES OF TEACHING ENDORSEMENTS

Type of Endorsement	Number Reporting
Communication	19
Art	36
Business/Marketing	53
English	726
Foreign Language	166
Home Economics/Industrial Technology	54
Physical Education/Health/Dance	146
Science	26
Speech/Theater/Drama	151
Music	37
Social Studies	341
Mathematics/Computer Science	47
Reading	163
Journalism	38
Counseling	11
Gifted and Talented	21
Administration	19
Special Education/Mild Moderate	152
Special Education/Resource	225
Special Education/LD	113
Special Education/Severe, BH, IH	134

Table 1

Number and Percent of Usable Surveys Mailed and Returned by Class Composition

Surveys Mailed and Returned	Class Composition*													
	Heterogeneous English Classes		General Track English Classes		Low Track English Classes		Special Education Classes		Reading Classes		Chapter I Classes		Total	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Mailed & Returned	282		299		129		295		131		36		1172	(86.6)
Mailed & Not Returned	76		31		0		29		45		0		181	(13.4)
Total	358	(26.5)	330	(24.4)	129	(9.5)	324	(24.0)	176	(13.0)	36	(2.6)	1353	(100.0)

*Class composition refers to the different grouping patterns used to place students in classes. Heterogeneous Classes included students of all ability levels except those in Honors or Advanced Placement classes. General Track Classes included students who were advised or elected to take the non-college preparatory English classes. Low Track Classes included students who were homogeneously grouped into English classes for low-achieving students.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Teachers Who Returned Surveys by School Type and Class Composition

School Type	Class Composition															
	Heterogeneous English Classes		General Track English Classes		Low Track English Classes		Special Education Classes		Reading Classes		Chapter I Classes		Total	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Middle School	142	(36.2)	66	(16.8)	18	(4.6)	82	(20.9)	72	(18.4)	12	(3.1)	392	(100.0)
Junior High	59	(18.0)	73	(22.8)	39	(11.9)	92	(27.9)	45	(13.7)	21	(6.4)	329	(100.0)
Senior High	58	(14.4)	159	(29.6)	72	(17.7)	104	(25.9)	7	(1.7)	2	(0.5)	402	(100.0)
Combination High School	23	(47.0)	1	(2.0)	0	(0.0)	17	(34.7)	7	(14.3)	1	(2.0)	49	(100.0)
Total	282	(24.2)	299	(25.6)	129	(11.0)	295	(25.1)	131	(11.2)	36	(3.0)	1172	(100.0)

Table 3

Age of Respondents

	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-50	51+	Missing	Total
n	58	113	134	227	434	174	32	1172
(%)	(5)	(9.6)	(11.4)	(19.4)	(37)	(14.9)	(2.7)	(100)

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Table 4

Years of Teaching Experience

	1-3*	4-6	7-10	11-15	16+	Missing	Total
n	244	191	169	216	350	2	1172
(%)	(20.8)	(16.3)	(14.4)	(18.4)	(29.9)	(0 .2)	(100.0)

*Of the respondents in this category 80 or 6.8% had less than one year of teaching experience

Table 5

Number of Teachers Indicating Completion of Courses or Workshops Related to Reading Instruction by Class Composition

Courses/ Workshops	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282)	General Track English (n=299)	Low-Track English (n=129)	Special Education (n=295)	Reading (n=131)	Chapter I (n=36)	Total (n=1172)	(%)
Content Area Reading	169	156	83	125	78	21	632	(53.9)
Reading Diagnosis	92	94	60	66	56	12	480	(40.9)
Secondary Reading	98	166	62	103	57	13	449	(38.3)
Diagnosis of Writing Problems	83	130	37	167	45	8	433	(36.9)
Remedial Reading	57	46	45	156	36	12	352	(30.0)
Utah Writing Project	91	121	49	32	42	12	347	(29.6)
Direct Instruction Reading	20	15	13	178	6	3	235	(20.1)

Table 6

Teachers Indicating Completion of Workshops Related to Reading an/or Instruction for Low-Achievers

Title of Workshops	Number Completing	(%)*	Description of Workshop Content
Special Needs of Low-Achieving Students	339	(28.9)	Learning Strategy; Precision Teaching, Social Skills, etc.
Utah Writing Project	347	(29.6)	Process writing instruction
Instructional Planning	164	(13.9)	Outcome-based Education
Special Needs of At-Risk Students	118	(10.1)	Behavior Management; Drug Awareness, "Boys Town"
Other Reading Workshops	147	(12.5)	Whole Language, ECRI, Content Area Reading, Direct Instruction/Reading, etc.

*These percentages were computed by dividing the number of responses by 1172, the total number of responses

Table 7

Number of Teachers Reporting Membership in Professional Organizations by Class Composition

Organization	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282)	General Track English (n=299)	Low Track English (n=129)	Special Education (n=295)	Reading (n=131)	Chapter I (n=36)	Total (n=1172)	(%)
National Council Of Teachers of English (NCTE) (19.7)	58	111	32	7	20	3	231	
Utah Council of Teachers of English (UCTE) (8.0)	27	38	12	2	13	2	94	
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) (6.7)	0	0	1	74	2	2	79	
International Reading Association (IRA) (3.3)	9	7	3	10	8	2	39	
Utah Council of the International Reading Association (UCIRA) (2.8)	7	8	0	5	12	1	33	

Table 8

Twenty Skills Teachers Indicated Teaching Frequently by Class Composition

Skills/ Strategies	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282) (Rank)	General Track English (n=299) (Rank)	Low Track English (n=129) (Rank)	Special Education (n=295) (Rank)	Reading (n=131) (Rank)	Chapter I (n=36) (Rank)	Total (n=1172)	(%)*
Main Idea/Detail	246 (1)	233 (1)	113 (1)	235 (1)	107 (1)	33 (1)	967	(82.5)
Context Clues	203 (2)	203 (2)	101 (2)	188 (5)	99 (2)	29 (2)	823	(70.2)
Inference	190 (4)	195 (3)	83 (5)	155	89 (4)	28 (3)	740	(63.1)
Drawing Conclusions	179 (5)	187 (4)	81	154	93 (3)	19	713	(60.8)
Following Directions	150	141	84 (4)	208 (2)	75	27 (4)	685	(58.4)
Comprehension Monitoring	150	132	53	198 (3)	84	23	640	(54.6)
Summarization	167	167	90 (3)	116	77	18	635	(54.2)
Organizational Patterns	165	170	66	115	86 (5)	20	622	(53.1)
Plot	93 (3)	180	62	66	77	13	591	(50.4)
Sight Vocabulary	128	105	64	191 (4)	57	23 (5)	568	(48.4)
Character Traits	170	179	50	67	75	17	558	(47.6)
Predicting Outcomes	138	138	62	104	84	12	538	(45.9)
Figurative Language	175	181 (5)	49	34	71	12	522	(44.5)
Question-Answer Relationships	125	129	61	122	51	15	503	(42.9)
Critical Reading	144	150	37	78	54	17	480	(40.9)

Table 8 (Continued)

Twenty Skills Teachers Indicated Teaching Frequently by Class Composition

Skills/ Strategies	Heterogeneous English (n=282)	(Rank)	General Track English (n=299)	(Rank)	Low Track English (n=129)	(Rank)	Special Education (n=295)	(Rank)	Reading (n=131)	(Rank)	Chapter I (n=36)	(Rank)	Total (n=1172)	(%)*
Structural Analysis	87		95		45		91		35		10		363	(30.9)
Self-Questioning	90		83		28		73		33		11		318	(27.1)
Mood	89		115		31		27		30		9		302	(25.7)
Phonics	40		31		29		144		18		10		272	(23.2)
Perceiving Relationships	69		76		26		40		37		7		255	(21.7)

Table 9

Percentage of Teachers Indicating Differentiating between Teaching Literature and Teaching Reading by Class Composition

	Class Composition													
	Heterogeneous English		General Track English		Low Track English		Special Education		Reading		Chapter I		Total	
Number	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Differentiate	114	(38.1)	109	(38.6)	76	(58.9)	156	(52.9)	85	(64.8)	16	(44.5)	556	(47.4)
Do Not Differentiate	160	(53.5)	150	(53.2)	44	(34.1)	86	(29.2)	34	(25.9)	13	(36.1)	487	(41.6)
Missing	25	(8.4)	23	(8.2)	9	(7.0)	53	(17.9)	12	(9.2)	7	(19.4)	129	(11.0)
Total	299	(100.0)	282	(100.0)	121	(100.0)	295	(100.0)	131	(100.0)	36	(100.0)	1172	(100.0)

Table 10

Method for Deciding Which Skills to Teach by Class Composition

Method	Class Composition							
	Heterogeneous English (n=282)	General Track English (n=299)	Low Track English (n=129)	Special Education (n=295)	Reading (n=131)	Chapter I (n=36)	Total (n=1172)	(%)*
Observation	155	156	91	159	71	26	658	(56.1)
Core Curriculum	221	191	54	68	71	11	638	(54.4)
Teacher Made Tests	82	110	46	156	40	13	437	(37.3)
Teachers' Manual	98	77	19	52	50	4	300	(25.6)
Standardized Test	36	33	34	103	28	14	248	(21.2)
Criterion-Referenced Tests	14	16	14	106	13	7	170	(14.5)
Other (e.g. District Tests)	6	16	7	26	24	5	84	(7.2)

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Table 11

Materials Teachers Indicated Using to Teach Reading by Class Composition

Materials	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282)(Rank)	General Track English (n=299)(Rank)	Low Track English (n=129)(Rank)	Special Education (n=295)(Rank)	Reading (n=131)(Rank)	Chapter I (n=36)(Rank)	Total (n=1172)	%*
Skill Worksheets/ Workbooks	178 (3)	152 (4)	102 (1)	261 (1)	105 (1)	21 (2)	819	(69.8)
Novels	219 (1)	255 (1)	78 (3)	141 (4)	100 (2)	16 (4)	809	(69.0)
Short Stories	197 (2)	238 (2)	85 (2)	167 (3)	93 (3)	25 (1)	805	(68.7)
Literature Antholgies	173 (4)	219 (3)	50 (5)	43	53 (5)	9	547	(46.7)
High Interest Low Vocabulary Books	33	43	54 (4)	173 (2)	28	18 (3)	349	(29.8)
Videotapes	100 (5)	104 (5)	32	43	31	2	312	(26.6)
Magazines (Read, Scope, etc.)	62	61	44	92 (5)	37	15 (5)	311	(26.5)
Basal Readers	86	42	19	69	59 (4)	7	282	(24.1)
Teacher-Made Skill Games	45	52	37	42	27	7	210	(17.9)
Content Area Textbooks	50	32	18	73	18	2	193	(16.5)
Trade Magazines	30	30	20	29	19	3	131	(11.2)
Skill Kits	24	20	9	48	16	7	114	(9.7)
Job Related Material	13	23	20	45	8	3	112	(8.7)

Table 11 (Continued)

Materials Teachers Indicated Using to Teach Reading by Class Composition

Materials	Class Composition							
	Heterogeneous English (n=282)(Rank)	General Track English (n=299)(Rank)	Low Track English (n=129)(Rank)	Special Education (n=295)(Rank)	Reading (n=131)(Rank)	Chapter I (n=36)(Rank)	Total (n=1172)	%*
Audiotapes	30	36	8	16	10	2	102	(7.6)
Other (Newspaper, Units, etc.)	18	11	16	15	6	24	89	(4.8)
Commercial Games	17	14	3	14	8	0	56	

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Table 12

Level of Materials Teachers Reported Using by Class Composition

Level	Class Composition															
	Heterogeneous English		General Track English		Low-Track English		Special Education		Reading		Chapter I		Total	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Student Ability Level	48	(17.0)	47	(15.7)	81	(62.8)	213	(72.2)	64	(48.9)	25	(69.4)	478	(40.9)
Student Grade Level	158	(56.0)	180	(60.2)	20	(15.5)	18	(6.1)	40	(30.5)	3	(8.3)	419	(35.8)
Both	60	(21.3)	44	(14.7)	25	(29.4)	31	(10.5)	20	(15.3)	3	(8.3)	183	(15.6)
Missing	16	(5.7)	28	(9.4)	3	(2.3)	33	(11.2)	7	(5.3)	5	(14.0)	92	(7.8)
Total (100.0)	282	(100.0)	299	(100.0)	129	(100.0)	295	(100.0)	131	(100.0)	36	(100.0)	1172	

Table 13

Types of Instructional Methods and/or Approaches Teachers Reported Using by Class Composition

Methods/Approaches	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282)(Rank	General Track English (n=299)(Rank)	Low Track English (n=129)(Rank)	Special Education (n=295)(Rank)	Reading (n=131)(Rank)	Chapter I (n=36)(Rank)	Total (n=1172)	(%)
Directed Reading Lesson	120 (2)	108 (3)	50 (1)	121 (3)	75 (1)	14 (3)	488	(41.6)
Sustained Silent Reading	168 (1)	115 (2)	44 (2)	67	65 (2)	13 (4)	472	(40.3)
Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA)	110 (3)	116 (1)	43 (4)	62	56 (3)	17 (1)	404	(34.5)
Individualized Instruction (26.1)	69	52	42	92 (4)	39(4)	12	306	
Whole Language	92 (4)	79 (4)	33	52	38	7	301	(25.7)
Guided Reading Procedure	84 (5)	58 (5)	40	64	39 (4)	8	293	(25.0)
High Interest Low/ Vocabulary Books	24	40	44 (2)	141 (1)	26	17 (1)	292	(24.9)
Individual Skills	36	42	43 (5)	67	31	13 (4)	232	(19.9)
Direct Instruction (Reading Mastery/ Corrective Reading)	15	20	9	135 (2)	9	0	188	(16.0)
Language Experience	54	46	29	37	18	3	187	(15.9)
Precision Teaching	28	15	10	90 (5)	7	5	156	(13.3)
Advanced Organizers/ Structured Overviews	30	37	17	25	17	4	130	(11.1)
Basal Reader	49	19	8	20	31	1	128	(10.9)
Reading Guides	19	43	9	18	18	5	114	(9.7)

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Table 14

Methods of Organizing Students for Instruction by Class Composition

Classroom Organization	Class Composition: Heterogeneous English (n=282)	General Track English (n=299)	Low Track English (n=129)	Special Education (n=295)	Reading (n=131)	Chapter I (n=36)	Total (n=1172)	(%)
Individualize	91	93	46	148	59	25	462	39.4
Varies	115	113	54	46	35	4	387	33.0
Cooperative Groups	71	55	33	55	1	8	263	22.4
Group by Ability	25	24	22	75	12	8	166	14.2
Group by Interest	25	15	14	17	14	5	90	7.7

Table 15

Number of Minutes Spent by Students in Silent Reading Per Week by Class Composition

	Class Composition													
	Heterogeneous English		General Track English		Low Track English		Special Education		Reading		Chapter I		Total	
Minutes	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
0-15	23	(8.6)	27	(9.0)	18	(14.0)	47	(15.9)	12	(9.2)	1	(2.8)	128	(10.9)
16-30	55	(19.6)	72	(24.1)	35	(27.1)	73	(24.8)	16	(12.2)	15	(41.6)	266	(22.7)
1-60	105	(37.2)	127	(42.5)	45	(34.9)	87	(29.5)	41	(31.3)	8	(22.2	413	(35.2)
61-90	63	(22.3)	31	(10.4)	20	(15.5)	44	(14.9)	37	(28.2)	5	(13.9)	200	(17.1)
90+	26	(9.2)	6	(2.0)	8	(6.2)	11	(3.7)	22	(16.8)	3	(8.3)	76	(6.5)
Varies	4	(1.4)	1	(0.3)	0	(0.0)	26	(8.8)	0	(0.0)	2	(5.6)	33	(2.8)
Missing	6	(2.1)	35	(11.7)	3	(2.3)	7	(2.4)	3	(2.3)	2	(5.6)	56	(4.8)
Total	282	(100.0)	299	(100.0)	129	(100.0)	295	(100.0)	131	(100.0)	36	(100.0)	1172	(100.0)

Table 16

Number of Minutes Spent in Oral Reading Per Week by Class Composition

	Class Composition													
	Heterogeneous English		General Track English		Low Track English		Special Education		Reading		Chapter I		Total	
Minutes	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
0-15	67	(23.8)	74	(24.8)	34	(26.4)	29	(9.9)	31	(23.6)	5	(14.0)	240	(20.5)
16-30	88	(31.2)	75	(25.1)	34	(26.4)	56	(18.9)	34	(26.0)	5	(14.0)	292	(24.9)
31-60	67	(23.8)	79	(26.4)	24	(18.6)	75	(25.4)	27	(20.6)	15	(41.6)	287	(24.5)
61-90	25	(8.9)	20	(6.7)	18	(13.9)	63	(21.4)	18	(13.7)	4	(11.1)	148	(12.6)
90+	16	(5.6)	4	(1.3)	13	(10.1)	36	(12.2)	18	(13.7)	1	(2.7)	88	(7.5)
Varies	11	(3.9)	6	(2.0)	3	(2.3)	27	(9.2)	0	(0.0)	3	(8.3)	50	(5.2)
Missing	8	(2.8)	41	(13.7)	3	(2.3)	9	(3.1)	3	(2.3)	3	(8.3)	67	(5.7)
Total	282	(100.0)	299	(100.0)	129	(100.0)	295	(100.0)	131	(100.0)	36	(100.0)	1172	(100.0)

Table 17

Number of Teachers Indicating Methods Used to Determine Progress in Reading by Class Composition

Method	Class Composition							
	Heterogeneous English (n=282)	General Track English (n=299)	Low Track English (n=129)	Special Education (n=295)	Reading (n=131)	Chapter I (n=36)	Total (n=1172)	(%)
Observation	217	216	104	206	102	29	874	(74.6)
Teacher-Made Tests	192	189	80	169	86	21	737	(62.9)
Standardized Achievement Tests	118	96	62	116	56	25	473	(40.4)
Criterion-Referenced Tests	56	30	28	132	39	8	293	(25.0)
Standardized Diagnostic Tests	34	34	36	119	37	8	268	(22.9)
Other (e.g., District Competency Tests)	21	20	14	20	11	1	102	(8.7)

Table 18

Number of Teachers Indicating Completion of Courses Related to Reading Instruction

Course Titles	Undergraduate Courses	Graduate Courses	Graduate & Undergraduate Courses	Total	%*
Reading Methods Courses					
Content Area Reading/Writing	366	141	54	561	(49.7)
Reading Diagnosis	291	147	42	480	(40.9)
Secondary Reading	289	114	46	449	(38.3)
Elementary Reading	325	74	34	433	(36.9)
Remedial Reading	196	122	35	352	(30.0)
Other Reading	56	62	5	123	(10.5)
Special Education Reading Methods Courses					
Direct Instruction Reading	124	75	11	210	(17.9)
English/Language Arts Courses					
Literature Courses	696	47	214	957	(81.7)
English Composition	776	50	121	947	(80.8)
Language Arts	528	50	108	686	(58.8)
Creative Writing	476	106	78	660	(56.3)
Adolescent Literature	491	98	51	640	(54.6)
Speech	473	13	25	511	(43.6)
Writing Diagnosis	206	126	69	401	(34.2)
Drama	302	19	41	362	(30.9)
Supporting Course					
Tests & Measurement	321	235	68	624	(53.2)
Linguistics	206	45	29	399	(34.0)

*These percentages represent the number of responses divided by 1172, the total number of respondents.

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